

HOME READING.

Together.

at noon of the same day, or twelve hours before he left.

This thing of losing or gaining a day in travelling around the world is a very interesting thing, and one that is not often mentioned. It is Sunday where we are, but to-morrow in New Zealand and yesterday in London, so that according to the English calendar I am not as old as I am, yet by the calendar of New Zealand I am older than I ought to be. How the etherial beings, called "angels," who balance themselves by two wings, and are supposed to traverse the breadth of the universe in the twinkling of an eye, ever keep track of the day of the week, and know the one upon which to rest and behave themselves is one of the profound mysteries! I suppose I must give in and call this day Saturday in order to keep a correct tally with the captain. I know it is Sunday because my almanac (warned to keep in any climate) says it is. Besides have I not worked six days and rested on the seventh, eating "duff" on Thursday and Sunday, ever since we left New York, and is it possible for me to have skipped ahead a day with all those checks upon error? For all that the captain comes down on me with his figures (which never lie) and forces me to admit that I am ahead of "Greenwich time." Little did I dream when he initiated me into the mysteries of this "Greenwich time," of the straits to which it would finally bring me!

Sea Yarns.

The sun commences to travel south sometime in June and goes at the rate of twenty odd miles a day. We have caught up with and passed them. Old Blumminator, and now, for the first time in my life, I am south of the sun, south of the equator, and out of sight of the north star. How eagerly I have watched this star, night after night, descending (to the sight) nearer and nearer to the horizon, and when a few nights since I found it had disappeared entirely my heart gave a throb as it would had I lost some dear old friend.

Once I was a "chicken man" and loved to keep a hen. The knowledge then gained served me well to-day, and now the sailors gaze on me with a sort of wondering awe as a remarkable surgeon. The steward brought me a hen, apparently dying, to ascertain what ailed it. I saw at once it was a crop-bound, and determined to open the crop and clean it out. I was satisfied that no one aboard had ever seen such an operation performed or imagined that it could be done safely, so I improved the opportunity to ventilate my knowledge. I took some time in making my preparations, then threw the hen on her back and quickly and dexterously slit open the crop with my knife and turned its contents out. It was full of ravellings of tarred rope. In less time than it takes to write it I had the crop opened, emptied, cleaned, and sewed up again, the bird all the while lying motionless with closed eyelids. All thought it dead of course, and Mr. Allen was "buzzing" the steward to make a poppie of it instead of boiling as usual. I sent Tommy for some corn meal and mixed up a small handful to a soft mush; then lifting the hen to her feet, I put her head in the dish and she began to eat as though her life depended upon it, strutting off to her perch afterwards with a loud cackle that woke up all the fowl on board. I shall never forget the look of puzzled amazement each face wore as the hen began to eat and walk again.

We are having gloriously steady westerly gales right along, the wind almost always dead aft. The winds in this region blow from the west nearly all the year and are so strong that in the North Atlantic they would be called gales. The waves are frightful to look upon, reaching far above our topsides when the brig descends into the sea. There is not a dry spot on every vessel, the sea breaking over her in every direction. They come rushing over and over, roaring and foaming, and looking as though they would bury our little craft beneath them; but at the stern they part, and lifting her high out of water, go roaring along by her side, every now and then giving her a slap, generally amidships, just as much as to say, "How are you, old gal?"—(possibly) tumbling aboard at the forward shrouds to catch the eat napping or to douse a sailor just after he had been below and put on dry toggery—then meeting at the bow and forming a broad sheet of white foam. We are fairly walking away with the degrees of longitude. For every 30 miles run we have made 43 miles of longitude! With such a gale, such seas, and such ugly clouds overhead, and a barometer down to 28.75, it is not strange that such of our sailors who are in this region for the first time should look blue "around the gills" when ordered to the wheel. However, after a few days of such sailing, one gets used to it and the terror passes away.

I often hear the sailors talking of "Father Taylor," a poor devil, who formerly preached to sailors in Boston. He was a reformed sea captain, and did a world of good, it is said. He was very plain in speech, using rough, original language to inculcate his meaning and to make himself understood by the illiterate crowds he had to deal with. The sailors were speaking of him to-day, and one told the following anecdote:

One day a drunken sailor entered the chapel and staggered on the aisle. Father Taylor stopped his discourse, and raising his voice, cried out to the man.

"Luff, brother, luff! You'll weather the yet with the lee leech of your 'topsal smoking'!" (so heartily cupized that he would just gaze by and no more.) Anyone who has been to sea will understand how impressive such a charge would be when addressed to an old sea-dog. It is said that it not only sobered the man, but helped to reform him. I passed aft and heard Mr. Stone humming a pretty little melody, and as he is a capital singer, I sang out, "Louder, brother Stone, let's have all of it." He needed no second invitation, but straightway up and gave me:

BEN BACKSTAY.

Ben Backstay was our boatswain, a very merry boy. And no one half so merry could pipe all hands aloft. It happened that his summons we did not quickly heed.

No one, then, he, more merrily, could handle a rope's end!

When sailing once, our captain, who was a jolly dog.

One day did give to every man, a double share of grog.

Ben Backstay he got tipsy, all to his heart's content.

And being "half seas over," why, overboard he went.

A shark was on our starboard (sharks don't for manners stand,

But grapple all they come near just like the sharks on land).

We threw a few some running gear of saving, in the ropes.

But the sharks had let his heart off so he could see the ropes.

Without a head his ghost appeared upon the briny lake.

He piped "All hands aloft!" and said, "Luff, luff, luff!"

Through drinking grog my life I lost, and unless my fate you meet.

Way, never mix your liquor, boys, but always drink it neat!

It is not only singular, but somewhat disgusting, that in nearly every sailor song, the burden of the rhyme has more or less reference to liquor and drunkenness.

"Independents" Answered.

George W. Green, Secretary National Committee of Republicans and Independents.

Sir: I have received your favor of August 28, together with the political documents which you desire me to read, in the hope that I may aid you in distributing similar literature. It has generally been my habit to think with the Independent elements of the Republican party, especially in regard to administrative reform, and I have an admiration for the record, services and abilities of your honored chairman which is exceeded by that of none of his present followers, among whom I am not to be numbered.

You address me as "an earnest and conscientious Republican." I sincerely believe that you are right. I am as "earnest" in desiring Republican success now as ever before, and I am as "conscientious" in my opposition to the triumph of the Democratic "conspiracy for plunder and spoils" as I have ever been. I am a member of the National Committee of the Republican party, and I have an admiration for the record, services and abilities of your honored chairman which is exceeded by that of none of his present followers, among whom I am not to be numbered.

The movement which you represent has been thrown continually on its own defence; some of its leaders have been forced to disown their former opinions, dispassionate reached, in regard to the Republican candidate. Mr. Beecher forgets the remarks which he made at the Arthur meeting in New York; Mr. Schurz swallows the bitter medicine which was so hurtful on the first trial, and which he promised never to take again. Colonel Codman joins the Democracy at a time which he once pronounced improper, that is, before it had repudiated its bloody oppression at the South; and the natural result has been that the Independent advance has become a retreat, with daily diminishing ranks.

The literature which you kindly send me I am already quite familiar with. I cannot aid in circulating it. Its judgments I deem misjudgments, the acceptance of which would hinder and jeopard the good causes that we all have at heart. I should much prefer to distribute *The Boston Advertiser's* opinions of Mr. Garrison in 1850 and the judgments of *Harper's Weekly* on Mr. Lincoln in 1860, or any other old-time and exploded criticisms, with which these papers against Mr. Blaine deserve to rank. Mr. Schurz's able speech appears to exhibit more of the adroit malignity of Mephistopheles than the judicious candor and wise discernment of an impartial historian. I find no reason to believe that Mr. Schurz understands the character of Mr. Blaine better than President Garfield, better than Mr. Blaine's companions in the National Legislature and his neighbors in Augusta, better even than the "Confederate Congress," which could manufacture no case against him, better than the Democratic Senators who voted his confirmation as Secretary of State. For those Independent friends who have become convinced, some of them quite recently, that Mr. Blaine is an unworthy man, I have felt like offering Cromwell's prayer before one of his Parliaments: "I beseech you brethren, I beseech you in the bowels of Christ, to believe that you may be mistaken." In his memorable eulogy of Wendell Phillips, Mr. Curtis said: "No man, indeed, can take the chief part in tumultuous National controversy without encountering misjudgment and reproach and unmeasured condemnation." I look on Mr. Blaine's candidacy as a cheerful sign that our greatest statesmen are not to be pushed aside because they have aroused jealousy and excited animosity. The "dark horse" mania is a discredit to popular government. I quote once more from the eulogy. Mr. Curtis says of the anti-slavery hero that he "rejected that rear of the multitude which springs from the feeling that the many are ignorant while the few are wise and he believed the saying, too profound for Talleyrand, to whom it is ascribed, that every body knows more than any body."

Is it not possible that "the supreme council of the Republican party" was fully as wise as its most illustrious member? Is it not probable that one who has long been first in the hearts of a great people has a right to that august position? To me at least it is significant that Mr. Blaine is held in the highest esteem by many of the best men that I have the honor to call my friends. He is cherished with equal regard by some of the noblest men in the Nation; and I cannot circulate any misleading judgments, however honestly entertained, in regard to his character.

It is evident to me that Independent spirit has made a mistake, as Governor Long has suggested, both in its victim and its hero. The present campaign, with all its surprises, has witnessed nothing more surprising than the humiliation of those who discovered in Governor Cleveland an ideal candidate. Letting Mr. Roosevelt preface the Democratic nominee's Cleveland pretences, and the religious press that nominee's unsavory personal history, and the journals and pamphlets the meanness of his intellectual furnishing and the poverty of his record, I can but express regret that your notable ally, *The Nation*, whose editor Mr. Lowell has praised for "heightening and purifying the tone of our political thought," should become by its immoral apologies for its candidate, a potent "corrupter of youth." This defection is more amazing than would be the discovery of "sweet reasonableness" in *The New York Times*, or of political principle in *The New York Herald*.

The literature which I have circulated during this campaign includes Mr. Blaine's letter of acceptance, which has not been surpassed in our history, Edwin D. Mead's open letter to *The Boston Advertiser*, Senator Hoar's masterly letter to a young friend and Governor Long's speech at Tremont

Temple, and it is a pleasure to know that these noble documents have turned numbers into friends and friends into earnest political missionaries. And every day strengthens my confidence that the nomination which was made by Senator Hoar rigidly said was made by what is best in our American life is to be vindicated, not only in November, but also by an administration growing in favor with those who believe in improved civil service, in protection to American citizenship, and the advancement of American nationality. But I deeply regret that this victory must be achieved without the aid of some of those whose convictions you represent, and I am sure that it is with sorrow that you support a different electoral ticket from that favored by the great majority of the men who conquered the rebellion and saved the National credit, in whose ranks I discover such noble cellanones as Andrew D. White, President Woolsey and President Chamberlain. Dr. Mark Hopkins and Dr. Richard S. Storrs, Edward Everett Hale and Henry M. Field, Dr. Edwin B. Webb and President Capen, Neal Dow and John B. Gough, John G. Whittier and Henry Cabot Lodge, Governor Robinson and Governor Fairbanks, John Sherman and Governor Fairchild, John D. Long and Robert T. Lincoln, Senator Hoar and Senator Harrison, General Hawley and General Grant, Gausman, A. Grow and William Walter Phelps, Judge Hoar and Judge Foster, Theodore Roosevelt and Stewart L. Woodford, William M. Evans and George F. Edmunds. I remain yours most sincerely,

JOHN HENRY BARROWS.
Pastor's Study, First Presbyterian Church,
Chicago.
Sept. 5, 1884.

Mr. Pudster's Return.

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Solomon Pudster and Mr. Gideon Maggleby were bosom friends, nor could they well be otherwise. They were both born on the 29th of May, 1815, in Gower street, Bloomsbury; Solomon entering upon the world's stage at an early hour in the morning at No. 69, and Gideon first seeing the light about midday at No. 96. At the age of ten they were sent to Westminster school; at the age of seventeen they became fellow-clerks in the great West India warehouse of Ruggleton, Matta & Co.; at the age of four-and-twenty they went into partnership as sugar merchants in Mincing Lane. At that period they were bachelors, and being already sincerely attached one to the other, they decided to live together in a pleasant little house in the then fashionable neighborhood of Fitzroy Square. For years they were inseparable. Day after day they breakfasted and dined together at home, and worked and lunched together in the city; and but for the fact that the firm purchased a large sugar estate in Demerara, Solomon Pudster and Gideon Maggleby would probably have never been parted for more than a few hours at a time until death decreed a dissolution of their partnership. The sugar estate, unfortunately, required a great deal of looking after; and at regular intervals of two years, one of the partners was obliged to cross the Atlantic and to remain absent from his friend for five or six months. Solomon and Gideon alternately undertook these troublesome expeditions, and braved the heat and mosquitoes of the tropics; and meantime the firm of Pudster & Maggleby prospered exceedingly; and no shadow of a cloud came between the devoted friends—the former of whom, on account of his being a few hours the older, was declared senior partner in the firm.

But in the year 1855 an important event happened. Mr. Pudster and Mr. Maggleby ran down by train one evening to see the fireworks at the Crystal Palace, and on their return journey they found themselves in a compartment, the only other occupant of which was a remarkably buxom and cheery-looking widow of about forty years of age. The two gentlemen, with their accustomed gallantry, entered into conversation with her. They discovered that she and they had several friends in common, and that she was, in fact, a certain Mrs. Bunter, whose many domestic virtues and abounding goodness had often been spoken of in their hearing. They were charmed with her; they begged, as if with one accord, to be permitted to call upon her at her house in Chelsea; and when, after putting her in a cab at Victoria Station, they started off to walk home, they simultaneously exclaimed with enthusiasm: "What a splendid woman!"

"Ah, Gideon!" ejaculated Mr. Pudster, sentimentally, a few moments later.

"Ah, Solomon!" responded Mr. Maggleby, with equal passion.

"If we only had such an angel at home to welcome us!" continued the senior partner.

"Just what I was thinking," assented Mr. Maggleby, who thereupon looked up at the moon and sighed profoundly.

"No other woman ever affected us in this way," Gideon said. Mr. Pudster: "and here we are at fifty—"

"Fifty last May, Solomon."

"Well, we ought to know better!" exclaimed Mr. Pudster, with warmth.

"So we ought, Solomon."

"But upon my word and honor, Gideon, Mrs. Bunter's a magnificent specimen of her sex."

"She is Solomon; and I don't think we can conscientiously deny that we are in love with her."

"We are," said Mr. Pudster, with much humility.

Having thus ingeniously confessed their passion, the two gentlemen walked on in silence, and it was not until they were near home that they again spoke.

"I suppose that it will be necessary, as a matter of formal business," suggested Mr. Pudster, diffidently, for us to call on Mrs. Bunter and apprise her of the state of our feelings. We mean, of course, to follow the matter up?"

"Certainly, certainly," agreed Mr. Maggleby, "we mean to follow the matter up."

"Perhaps the firm had better write to her and prepare her mind," proposed the senior partner, with kindly forethought.

"The firm had better write to-morrow, Solomon; but, Solomon, it occurs to me that the firm cannot marry Mrs. Bunter. You or I must be the happy man; and then, Solomon, we shall have to separate."

"Never!" ejaculated Mr. Pudster, who stopped and seized his friend by the hand—"never! you shall marry Mrs. Bunter, and we will all live together."

"Solomon, this magnanimity!" murmured Mr. Maggleby, who had tears in his eyes.

Now, I am not at all such a sacrifice. Mrs. Bunter, Mr. Maggleby, of course, officiating as best man at the wedding, and being the first to salute the bride in the vestry after the ceremony. Then, of course, for a whole year, the three members of the firm lived together in complete harmony, and the pleasant history of their existence was only interrupted by Mr. Pudster's enforced departure for Demerara in September, 1866. Mr. Maggleby, it is true, offered to go instead of him, but Mr. Pudster would not hear of it, and Mr. Maggleby was obliged to confess that business was business, and it was certainly Mr. Pudster's turn to brave the mosquitoes. And so, after confiding his wife to the care of his friend Mr. Pudster departed. During his absence, the comfort and well-being of his wife had been too much for poor Mr. Pudster. He had noticed that she was looking unwell, and with a full and unwell Maggleby, with sorrow, perceived that she was looking unwell. Nevertheless, Mr. Pudster took to his bed, and after a long and painful illness, died.

The grief of Mrs. Pudster and Mr. Maggleby was terrible to witness. Mrs. Pudster talked of retiring from the world; and Gideon Maggleby, disconsolately declared that he had no longer anything left to live for. No one, therefore, will be much surprised to hear that toward the end of March, 1867, Mr. Gideon Maggleby led Mrs. Solomon Pudster to the altar.

"Solomon will bless our union," Mr. Maggleby had said, when he proposed.

"Ah, dear sainted Solomon!" Mrs. Pudster had exclaimed as she fell weeping upon Mr. Maggleby's breast.

[To be continued.]

How will that do? asked Mr. Maggleby, with conscious pride.

"Excellent!" said Gideon. "But don't you think that 'most devotedly yours' sound rather too distant? What do you say to 'yours admirably'?"

"Yours to distraction" sounds best, I think," replied Mr. Maggleby, after considerable reflection. "I will put that in, and I will copy the letter, Solomon."

"We are about to take an important step in life," said Mr. Pudster, seriously. "Are you sure, Gideon, that we are not acting too hastily?"

"Mr. Pudster!" exclaimed Mr. Maggleby, warmly. "We may trust these sacred promptings of our finer feelings. We have lived too long alone. The firm needs the chaste and softening influence of woman. And who in this wide world is more fitted to grace our board than Mrs. Bunter?"

"So be it, then," assented the senior partner.

Mr. Maggleby recopied the letter, signed it with the firm's usual signature, and carried it to the nearest letter-box. When he returned, he found his friend waiting to go to bed, and trying to keep himself awake by studying the marriage service.

On the following forenoon Mr. Pudster, with the scrupulous punctuality that is characteristic of city men, called at the Matador Villa, Chelsea, and was at once shown into the presence of Mrs. Bunter, who was waiting to receive him. I am quite at a loss to understand why you have done me the honor of coming to see me to-day," said the widow. "From your letter, I judge that you have some business proposal to make to me. Unfortunately, Mr. Pudster, I am not prepared to speculate in sugar. I am not well off. But perhaps I am under a misapprehension. The letter contains an expression which I do not understand."

"It is true," replied the senior partner, "that we have some hope of persuading you to speculate a little in sugar; and there is no reason why your want of capital should prevent your joining us."

"I quite fail to grasp your meaning," said Mrs. Bunter.

"Well, I am not very good at explanations," said Mr. Pudster, "but I will explain the situation as well as I can. You see, Mrs. Bunter, Mr. Maggleby, my partner, and myself are bachelors and live together. We find it dull. We long for the civilizing influences of woman's society. We are, in fact, tired of single blessedness. The firm is at present worth a clear five thousand a year. It will support a third partner, we think; and so we propose, Mrs. Bunter, that you should join it, and come and take care of us in a friendly way."

Mrs. Bunter looked rather uncomfortable, and was silent for a few moments. "You are very good," she said, at last; "but although I am not well off, I had not thought of going out as a housekeeper. The late Mr. Bunter left me enough for my little needs."

"I hope so, indeed, madam. But we don't ask you to come to us as a housekeeper simply. Marriage is what we offer you, Mrs. Bunter. In the name of Pudster & Maggleby I have the honor of proposing for your hand."

"Mercy!" exclaimed Mrs. Bunter, in some agitation. "Surely you would not have me marry the firm?"

"I put it in that way," said Mr. Pudster, "because Maggleby and I are practically one and the same. But I will be accurate. The proposition is, Mrs. Bunter, that you should become the wife of—ahem!—the senior partner, and that Mr. Gideon Maggleby should live with us in his old social way. Excuse my blunt way of expressing myself, Mrs. Bunter."

"Then you, Mr. Pudster, are the senior partner?" said Mrs. Bunter, with a very agreeable smile. "I am very much flattered, I assure you, but your proposal requires consideration."

"No doubt," assented Mr. Pudster. "The firm is willing to wait for your reply. In matters of business we are never in a hurry. When may we look for your answer?"

"Well, you shall have a note by to-morrow morning's post," replied Mrs. Bunter. "I may say," she added, "that I have heard a great deal of your firm, Mr. Pudster; and that I am conscious that it does me a great honor by thus offering me a partnership in it."

"Indeed, madam, the honor is ours!" said Mr. Pudster, bowing as he retired.

No sooner had he departed than the widow burst into a long and merry fit of laughter. Her first impulse was to write and refuse the ridiculous offer; but as the day wore on she thought better of the affair, and in the evening after dinner she sat down quite seriously and wrote a letter as follows:

MATADOR VILLA, CHELSEA,
August 5, 1865.

To Messrs. Pudster & Maggleby, 14 Mincing Lane, City.

GENTLEMEN: I have decided to accept the very flattering offer which was laid before me to-day in your behalf by your Mr. Pudster. If he will call, I shall have much pleasure in arranging preliminaries with him. I remain, gentlemen, very faithfully yours,

MARIA BUNTER.

"I must fall in with their humor, I suppose," she reflected. "And really, Mr. Pudster is a very nice man, and almost handsome; and I'm sure I shall do no harm by marrying him. Besides, it is quite true that they must want some one to look after them. If they go on living by themselves, they will grow crusty and snarlish." And Mrs. Bunter sent her maid out to post the letter.

Three weeks later the widow became

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